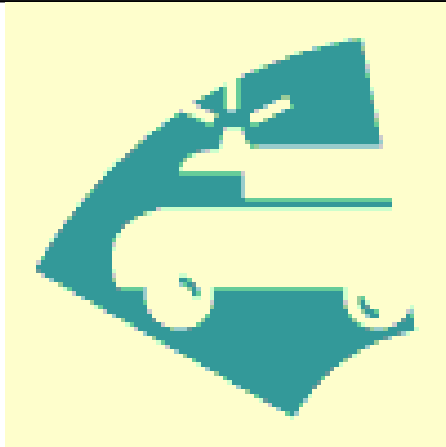


Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board



Annual Report



September 2008 - August 2009



**Mid-County Regional Center
2424 Reddie Drive
Wheaton, Maryland 20902**

Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board 2009-2010 Annual Report

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Mission

The Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB) serves as Montgomery County's bridge to the 220,000 residents and businesses throughout the 99 square miles of the Mid-County service area. The boundaries of that area extend north to Howard County; south to the Beltway, I-495; east to Sligo Creek Parkway, and west to Rock Creek Park. The MCCAB serves as liaison between the wide network of communities including Aspen Hill, Brookeville, Capital View, Derwood, Flower Valley, Forest Glen, Glenmont, Kemp Mill, Kensington, Layhill, Laytonsville, Norbeck, Olney, Sandy Spring, Upper Rock Creek, and Wheaton; and Montgomery County agencies. The Board provides advice and recommendations to the County Executive on policy and budget issues, planning and goal setting procedures, and legislative matters; educates the community on governmental structures and services; and acts as a facilitator to foster solutions to community problems, needs, and issues.

Membership

The MCCAB consists of 15 members who are appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council. The membership also includes Associate Members who participate as non-voting members in Board meetings, and Liaison Members from other County Boards and other civic and community organizations that facilitate and improve communications between and among community groups and the MCCAB. Each year the MCCAB members elect a Chair, Vice Chair, and Parliamentarian who serve for one year and can serve 2 consecutive years.

The membership of the 2008-2009 MCCAB was as follows:

Chair: Sheldon Fishman – Forest Glen

Vice Chair: Matt Zaborsky - Norbeck/Olney

Parliamentarian: Gamunu "Gam" Wijetunge – Wheaton Volunteer Rescue Squad

Eileen Cahill – Norbeck/Muncaster Mill

L. Blaine Charak – Wheaton

Jennifer Deng-Pickett – Carroll Knolls/McKenny Hills (Resigned – June 2009)

Andrew Fraser – Kensington (Resigned - January 2009)

Lisa Hoston – Kemp Mill

Frieda K. Lacey - Layhill

Randy McDonald – Aspen Hill (Appointed – April 2009)

Steve Morrison – Layhill/Bel Pre

Sean Neary - Kensington

Helen Ray – Norbeck

Gabriel Ruiz – Layhill/Bel Pre

Mary Scholl – Manor Woods/Bel Pre

Gus Tseronis - Olney

Liaisons

Mid-County Recreation Advisory Board – Michael Cox
Olney Town Center Advisory Committee – Eileen Cahill
Department of Permitting Services Advisory Committee – Steve Morrison
Wheaton Redevelopment Advisory Committee – Jennifer Deng-Pickett
Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee – L. Blaine Charak

Support Staff:

Natalie Cantor, Director, Mid-County Regional Services Center
Carol McKenzie, Assistant Director, Mid-County Regional Services Center
Helene Rosenheim, Olney Community Liaison, Mid-County Regional Services Center

Meeting Highlights

The MCCAB meets on the third Tuesday of each month except August, generally at the Mid-County Regional Services Center, 2424 Reddie Drive, Wheaton, Maryland 20902.

This past year the MCCAB held a number of meetings in the community. In November, the Board met at the Olney Library and welcomed residents from the area to their meeting. The MCCAB hosted the County Executive's Operating Budget Forum in January at Wheaton High School. In March, the monthly meeting was held at the Bauer Drive Community Center – many of the members of the Mid-County Recreation Advisory Board attended to discuss issues of mutual interest. In July, the MCCAB hosted the County Executive's Capital Improvements Program Budget Forum at the Park Police Headquarters at Saddlebrook.

Each month the agenda generally includes:

A Special Presentation or Briefing
Chair Report
Committee Reports
Director's/Staff Report that includes updates from the County Executive
and highlights and/or updates a report emailed to CAB members prior to the meeting
County Council Update
Mid-County Recreation Advisory Board Report
Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee Report
Community Concerns

Minutes of recent MCCAB meetings are available online at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/midcounty, and then click "Citizen Advisory Board, Committees, and Partnerships."

Accomplishments

The MCCAB adopted better quality of life, fiscal sustainability, and community engagement as their priorities for 2008-2009.

CIP/Operating Budget

In December 2008, the MCCAB decided to focus their comments to the County Executive concerning the budget to more systemic suggestions for improvements to the budget process, and only identify a few specific projects of critical importance.

In January 2009, the MCCAB hosted one of County Executive Leggett's FY2010 Operating Budget Forums at Wheaton High School. That same evening, during their regular meeting, the MCCAB received a draft list of priorities arrived at jointly by the MCCAB, Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee, (WUDAC) and Wheaton Redevelopment Advisory Committee (WRSC) for presentation to County Executive Isiah Leggett. The Discussion Points for the meeting with the County Executive on February 25, 2009 is included in Appendix C, Page 33.

In March 2009, the MCCAB held their meeting at the Bauer Drive Community Center and invited residents to attend a meeting in their neighborhood.

In April 2009, Mr. Charak testified on behalf of the MCCAB before the County Council on the County Executive's Recommend FY10 Operating Budget. The talking points used for the joint CAB/WUDAC/WRAC/MCRAB meeting with the County Executive served as the basis for that testimony. Those points focused on improving the budget process including using the upcoming MC311 system and the CountyStat system to improve County procedures and in formulating upcoming budgets; and to protect the most vulnerable portions of the population. The Board felt this was important because of the large percentage of vulnerable residents in the Mid-County service area. The MCCAB Public Hearing Testimony is included in Appendix D, Page 37.

In April 2009, the MCCAB also voted to send a letter to the County Executive and the County Council opposing the proposed staff cuts at the Wheaton Volunteer Rescue Squad and the Kensington Fire Station. (Appendix B, Page 19)

In June 2009, the MCCAB hosted one of the County Executive's Capital Improvements Program Budget Forums at the Montgomery County Park Police Headquarters. During their business meeting immediately following Budget Forum, the MCCAB compiled a preliminary list of CIP projects that was later prioritized for presentation to the County Executive on August 6, 2009. The Priority List as presented to the County Executive is included in Appendix E, Page 39.

Land Use

- **Kensington Sector Plan Study**

In July 2009, the MCCAB voted to send a letter to the Montgomery County Parks & Planning Commission's Planning Board noting some positive aspects of the proposed changes to the Kensington Sector Plan and concerns about the proposed density and traffic, and requesting a staging plan. (Appendix B, Page 16)

- **Proposed EZ Storage Facility in Sandy Spring**

In December 2008, the MCCAB voted to send a letter to the Montgomery County Parks & Planning Commission's Planning Board opposing the proposed development of an EZ Storage facility in Sandy Spring. (Appendix B, Page 14)

- **Wheaton Library**

In April 2009, the MCCAB voted to defer making a recommendation to the County Executive regarding the issue of relocating the Wheaton Library to downtown Wheaton vs. renovating the Library in its current location while other options are being explored. (Appendix B, Page 15)

Public Safety

- **Fire Code Enforcement**

In April 2009, Assistant Fire Chief Michael Donohue briefed the Board on fire code enforcement issues. At the April Meeting, the Board also voted to send letters to the County Executive and the County Council expressing concern about proposed cuts in staff at the Wheaton Volunteer Rescue Squad and the Kensington Volunteer Fire Department, Station 5 and asking the Public Safety Committee to take a thorough look at the direct service cuts in career firefighter hours and work with the Department of Fire and Rescue Services. (Appendix B, Page 19)

- **Immigration Checks**

In February 2009, the MCCAB voted to send a letter to the County Executive supporting the proposal to have police check the immigration status of individuals charged formally with violent and gun-related crimes. (Appendix B, Page 18)

Quality of Life

- **2010 Census**

In May 2009, the MCCAB voted to become a Partner of the 2010 Census to help promote the importance of participating in the upcoming census.

- **Code Enforcement Work Group Report**

In December 2008, the Board received a presentation from Tom Street, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer, who directed the County's Code Enforcement Work Group on behalf of the County Executive. Mr. Street was joined by Rick Nelson, Director of the County's Department of Housing and Community Affairs.

Also, at the December meeting, after much time spent by the Quality of Life Committee reviewing the report, the MCCAB voted to send a letter to the County Executive supporting the Code Enforcement Work Group Report. (Appendix B, Page 21)

- **Foreclosure**

In November 2008, the MCCAB hosted a foreclosure seminar jointly coordinated by the Mid-County and Silver Spring Regional Centers.

In December 2008, the MCCAB voted to send a letter to the State of Maryland supporting providing Montgomery County with funding to help relieve some of the problem related to foreclosure. . (Appendix B, Page 20)

In April 2009, the MCCAB voted to send a letter to County Executive proposing the establishment of an Adopt-A-Home type of program for foreclosed and vacated homes. This would permit homeowners associations and/or individuals and/or other groups to take care of external maintenance of vacated homes to keep up the appearance of their neighborhoods. . (Appendix B, Page 24)

- **Neighborhood Revitalization**

In April 2009, the MCCAB voted to send a letter to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development supporting the use of Community Development Block Grant funding to address community needs in the Mid-County Focused Neighborhood Assistance Area. . (Appendix B, Page 22)

In May 2009, the MCCAB voted to send a letter to the Department of Housing and Community Affairs supporting the Glenmont Focused Neighborhood Assistance Program a priority for the HUD stimulus funding. . (Appendix B, Page 23)

- **Positive Youth Initiative**

The MCCAB Chair serves as Co-Chair, along with the Director of the Mid-County Regional Center on the Kennedy Cluster Creating Opportunities for Youth Community Based Collaboration which is part of the County Executive's Positive Youth Initiative. In the past year, the Community Based Collaboration expanded from the Hewitt/Bel Pre area to the entire Kennedy Cluster. Some of the sponsored events included:

- Community meetings
- Collecting food for the Mid-County United Ministry Food Pantry on Community Service Day
- Volunteer Opportunities at the World of Montgomery Festival
- Argyle Middle School Youth Speak Out
- Youth Job/Resource Fair
- Spring Break Middle School Basketball Tournament
- Down County Soccer League Play (Spring and Summer leagues)
- Volunteer Opportunities at the Taste of Wheaton
- Expanded Summer Meals Program with bus service
- Skate Park Outing
- Bel Pre Square National Night Out

Recreation and Parks

- **MCCAB/Mid-County Recreation Advisory Board Merger**

In May 2009, the MCCAB voted to send a letter to the County Council opposing the proposed merger of the MCCAB and the Mid-County Recreation Advisory Board. . (Appendix B, Page 29)

- **Renaming Kensington Heights Park**

In May 2009, the MCCAB voted to send a letter to the Maryland-National Capital Parks and Planning Commission supporting the request by the Kensington Heights Civic Association that the Kensington Heights Park be renamed in memory of the late civic activist, Wayne Goldstein. (Appendix B, Page 27)

Transportation

- **Bus Rapid Transit System**

In February 2009, County Councilmember Marc Elrich briefed the Board on his proposed Bus Rapid Transit Plan.

In May 2009, The MCCAB voted to send a letter to the County Council supporting the funding of a feasibility of a bus rapid transit system in the County. (Appendix B, Page 32)

- **ICC Tour**

In July 2009, MCCAB members were escorted on a tour of Construction Phases A and B of the Inter-County Connector. The tour was lead by Cathy Smith and Odessa Phillip, State Highway Administration's ICC Community Liaisons for Contracts A and B, respectively.

- **ICC Funding**

In January 2009, the MCCAB voted to not support the suggestion that the Inter-County Connector (ICC) be defunded. They also voted to send a letter to the Cherrywood Homeowners Association, which had requested their support of the defunding, explaining their decision and offering to assist with any mitigation needed for impacts of the ICC. (Appendix B, Page 31)

- **Proctor Street Intersections**

In September 2008, the MCCAB voted to sent a letter of the Montgomery County Department of Transportation requesting a traffic study of the Proctor Street/Dryden Road and Proctor Street/Dennis Avenue intersections. (Appendix B, Page 30)

2009 MCCAB Citizen of the Year & Civic Association of the Year Awards

At 25th Annual Kensington-Wheaton Chamber of Commerce Awards Gala, the MCCAB presented their Citizen of the Year Award to Eleanor Duckett. They also presented their Civic Association of the Year Award to the Carroll Knolls/McKenney Hills Civic Association.

APPENDIX A

MCCAB Committees

In September 2008, the MCCAB agreed to the following Committee Structure.

Standing Committees

Each Board Member is required to serve on at least one standing committee of the Board. The chair of the committees shall serve at the pleasure of their respective committee. Each committee will designate one member who will focus on community engagement aspects of the work of their committee.

The general areas of responsibility of the standing committees are:

The Budget and Capital Projects Committee deals with issues involving the County Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and the Public Services Program (PSP), which encompasses the County's operating budget. The committee helps evaluate CIP issues including improvements for highways, transit, water and sewer, lighting, other utilities, parks and other County property, and other capital expenditures supporting commercial or neighborhood revitalization. It helps evaluate multi-year and annual budget plans supporting County operations and services, including the overall framework of revenues and expenditures as well as any legislative issues under its purview.

The Land Use and Zoning Committee deals with issues involving master plans, zoning and subdivision requirements, special exceptions, neighborhood and commercial revitalization, sewer water category changes, and related issues including impact fees, assessments and other charges. It helps evaluate changes in land use development affecting the broad region, the County, sub-areas, communities, commercial areas, neighborhoods, individual properties, as well as any legislative issues under its purview.

The Transportation Committee deals with issues involving all aspects of transportation, infrastructure and pedestrian safety for both County and State roads. Also may review legislative matters pertaining to transportation.

The Quality of Life Committee deals with issues brought to the Board by community members as well as "quality of life" matters pertaining to the Mid-County region. "Quality of life" matters can include: housing, public safety, education, etc.

Ad Hoc Committees

The Chair at his or her discretion, may at any time establish any number of ad hoc committees to assist in the performance of any activity in keeping with the purpose of the Board.

Committee Membership and Meeting Schedules

Each standing committee meets either at a specified time or on an as-needed basis prior to each monthly CAB meeting.

Budget & Capital Improvements

Meeting: 2nd Wednesday of the month

L. Blaine Charak, Chair

Eileen Cahill
Sheldon Fishman
Andy Fraser
Gus Tseronis

Land Use & Zoning

Meeting: As needed

Matt Zaborsky, Chair
Frieda Lacey
Steve Morrison

Quality of Life

Meeting: 1st Monday of the month

Jennifer Deng-Pickett, Chair
Sean Neary
Helen Ray
Mary Scholl

Transportation

Meeting: 1st Monday of the month

Gam Wijetunge, Chair
Lisa Hoston
Gabe Ruiz

APPENDIX B

2008-2009 MCCAB Correspondence

CIP/Operating Budget

See the April 23, 2009 letter under Public Safety, Page 19

CIP/Operating Budget



MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

July 16, 2009

The Honorable Isiah Leggett
County Executive
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear County Executive Leggett:

I am pleased to transmit the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB) Capital Improvements Program priority list in advance of our August 6th meeting with you. The MCCAB held a community forum on June 16th where our residents were invited to share their priorities with us. The Board was pleased with the turnout and the input we received.

We look forward to our meeting with you on August 6th and the opportunity to discuss our list with you in person.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Sheldon Fishman".

Sheldon Fishman, Chair

Note: See Appendix D, Page 37 of this Report for FY2011 Capital Improvements Priorities List

Land Use



MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

December 26, 2008

Mr. Royce Hanson, Chair
Montgomery County Planning Board
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Md. 20910

RE: EZ Storage/Sandy Spring – Preliminary Plan Number 120080410

Dear Mr. Hanson:

The Mid-County Citizen Advisory Board (MCCAB) would like to express our strong opposition to the proposed EZ storage facility in Sandy Spring. We firmly believe a facility such as this is totally inconsistent with the Sandy Spring Master Plan's goals and intent for this historic community. Furthermore, it diminishes the overall attractiveness of this whole community.

We have found that the 1998 Sandy Spring/Ashton Master Plan is silent on this small section of Route 108 (proposed location) and that it "should" be used for commercial development. However, while this Master Plan may not prohibit such a facility; we firmly believe that this facility is totally inconsistent with the development envisioned for this area. Sandy Spring is a peaceful little village and while it may desire to remain that way, its citizens realize that well planned and designed change that supports the goals of their Master Plan is both necessary and needed. We also believe that the high density housing that is needed to support such a facility does not exist in the immediate Sandy Spring or nearby Ashton area. Additionally, we are concerned that vehicular traffic from such a facility would overburden the already crowded local roads.

Representatives from the Sandy Spring Civic Association presented their concerns about this proposed use at a recent MCCAB meeting and we share their concerns. Their Association has indicated the community's desire for new development on this property, the former site of the W.H. Rental Center, as it is becoming dilapidated and an eye-sore. They have further indicated their desire to have and promote the "village center" concept in the Master Plan and are agreeable to commercial development that integrates well with existing and new businesses that have opened recently, such as a specialty foods market and a new restaurant.

Furthermore, we have been advised of the opposition that has also been voiced by the Greater Olney Civic Association (GOCA). This umbrella association represents developments in the Olney community, which is just west of Sandy Spring and is the area from which EZ Storage anticipates drawing a large share of its market.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

Sheldon Fishman, Chair

cc: Thene & George Martin
Sandy Spring Civic Association
Josh Sloan, Development Review, M-NCPPC
Fred Boyd, Community-Based Planning, M-NCPPC

Land Use



MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

May 19, 2009

The Honorable Isiah Leggett
Montgomery County Executive
50 Monroe Street
Rockville, Maryland 20850

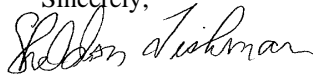
Dear Mr. Leggett:

On behalf of the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB), I want to express our support for the decision to defer action on the renovation of the Wheaton Library. This decision provides the Wheaton Redevelopment staff and the community with the opportunity to continue to look creatively at redevelopment options.

While the International Downtown Association has recommended that the Library be moved and considered as an anchor for any new development taking place in Wheaton, the community surrounding the Library has spoken forcefully about its desire to keep the Library in its present location. The current economic situation and spending constraints occurring in Montgomery County provide an opportunity to carefully consider whether to relocate the Wheaton Library to the Wheaton Urban District, renovate it in its current location, or consider other creative options that may incorporate plans for renovating the Wheaton Recreation Center and the Rafferty Center. It also provides time to explore a public/private partnership.

The MCCAB has also looked at the new Rockville and Germantown Libraries, and the plans for the Silver Spring Library. We understand that the buildings in Rockville and Silver Spring are not just libraries, and see the value of this type of mixed use development. We also see the value of the public/private partnerships formed to develop them, particularly in the current budget situation.

The MCCAB agreed that it is appropriate that no decision is being made now on whether to renovate or relocate the Library, particularly since the current economy precludes implementing such a decision. We, too, are not making any recommendation at this time as we feel there are too many unanswered questions. However, we hope that the time can be used to explore other options, collect data on alternatives and consider changes that may emerge in Wheaton over the next few years. The MCCAB will continue to follow the planning for the Wheaton Library and these other Wheaton facilities, and will forward future recommendations as planning progresses.

Sincerely,

Sheldon Fishman, Chair

Land Use



MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

July 23, 2009

Dr. Royce Hanson, Chair
Montgomery County Planning Board
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Md. 20910

Dear Dr. Hanson:

Our Land Use Committee, as well as the entire Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board, has reviewed the Draft Sector Plan for the Kensington Town Center and would like to offer our opinion as the Planning Board begins their deliberations.. While we applaud the new planning concepts, embrace the idea of getting people out of their cars, and creating more walkable and environmentally-friendly areas, we have some concerns.

First, over the past 30 years many areas, including Kensington, have been designed with the automobile in mind. The draft calls for only two road capacity improvements: (1) a new one-way road connecting Metropolitan Avenue to Plyers Mill and (2) the extension of Summitt Avenue to to Decatur Avenue. We feel this concept is not “sellable” to the community. In addition, we fear that by not improving other roadway intersections this plan conflicts with the planners explicit acknowledgement that “a critical bottleneck” already exists in Kensington. Consideration should be given to the possibility of a roundabout on Connecticut Avenue or other appropriate traffic calming device.

Second, the draft is proposing the creation of a new **Commercial Residential (CR)** zone. This new zone would call for increased density for projects near Metro stations. We recognize the existence of the MARC station in Kensington. However, this is certainly not the equivalent of a Metro stop since there only a limited number of trains and morning service ends by 8:00 am. We realize the benefits of increased density near Metro stations such as Bethesda, Silver Spring, and Wheaton, but do not think it is appropriate in Kensington. Thought should be given to engaging the railroad tracks and not hiding them by perhaps adding more trees. We would encourage planners to incorporate alternative transportation modes into this plan such as bus rapid transit, pedestrian-friendly walkways, and bicycle paths. We are concerned that in the event this new zone is not approved by the County Council valuable time and resources will have been wasted which will result in the need to “go back to the drawing board”. Additionally, we and the community are concerned that this is the right zoning for the Town Center and would further suggest that building height be limited to no more than 5 stories.

Third, this plan calls for approximately a 50% increase in density in the Town Center area and we have a great concern for the impact this would cause. **We take very strong exception** to the statement that development “is not expected to result in the need for additional schools”. Kensington-Parkwood Elementary is already over capacity. We feel certain this increased density will include school-aged children and believe that the conclusion that there will not be any impact on the schools may be based on inaccurate projected student enrollment numbers. We feel strongly that school boundaries should not be shifted due to development and therefore, strongly urge you to restudy this plan’s impact on schools.

Fourth, the current “business district” is fractured and Kensington is now known for great antique shopping. We would like to see core redevelopment in the form of nice walkable restaurants, coffee shops, a bakery and other community-friendly retail shopping. Everyone loves the Rockville Town Center and the Kentlands. Unfortunately,

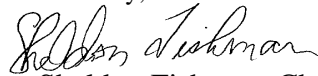
July 23, 2009 Letter to Dr. Royce Hanson, cont.

Kensington does not have the space to mirror what was accomplished in those areas. However, a “scaled down” version may be feasible with the proper plans. We feel all development should be secondary to a “central business core” providing not only convenience retail for the residents but reduced density. It would be great to have Kensington become a destination to attract people for more than just great antiques! We encourage including into the plan the possibility of expanding the Historic District perhaps through the use of a task force to compile community recommendations and concerns.

Fifth, Silver Creek flooding has been an issue for many years in this community. We recommend the plan consider different storm water management techniques such as reducing the amount of impervious surface, reducing flow rates from the north outside of Kensington, add additional capacity at Oberon Street, and consider the feasibility of removing the concrete channel. We would encourage the Planning Board to assure this lovely community that new development will not overtax current and proposed infrastructure.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Sheldon Fishman'.

Sheldon Fishman, Chair

Public Safety



MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

February 24, 2009

The Honorable Isiah Leggett
Montgomery County Executive
101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850

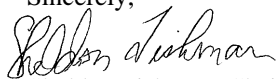
Dear Mr. Leggett:

I am writing on behalf of the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board in order to express our support for your proposal and recent decision to submit the names of all persons arrested and charged in Montgomery County for crimes of violence, as defined in the Maryland Criminal Law Code Section 14-101, or for wearing, carrying or transporting a handgun (Maryland Criminal Law Code Section 4-203) to the Federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

We remain concerned that everyone be treated with respect and dignity, and we do not want any neighbors subjected to racial profiling or unwarranted questioning by local authorities, particularly around immigration which is a federal issue. On the other hand, all individuals, regardless of ethnic heritage, should be protected from violent criminals, especially repeat offenders.

Therefore, the MCCAB believes it is important to pursue all charges, including immigration violations, for people who are arrested and formally charged with violent crimes and weapon offenses. We also agree it is not the function of the Montgomery County Police to conduct immigration status investigations.

Sincerely,



Sheldon Fishman, Chair

Public Safety



MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

April 23, 2009

The Honorable Phil Andrews
Council President and
Chair, Public Safety Committee
Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

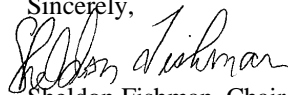
Dear Councilmember Andrews:

At our monthly meeting last night, the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board heard from a representative of the Wheaton Volunteer Rescue Squad and a representative from the Fire Chief's Office with regard to recommended cuts in the County Executive's Recommended Operating Budget. It is our understanding the recommended budget cuts will result in the Kensington Volunteer Fire Station #5 at Connecticut and Plyers Mill Road and the Wheaton Volunteer Rescue Squad #2 in downtown Wheaton to be short staffed during the hours of 6:00 to 7:00 am and again from 5:00 to 6:00 pm.

As Board Members and residents, we see the constant response of emergency units during rush hours. The area covered by these two stations includes three Metro stations, one of the most congested sections of the Beltway, and major roads such as Connecticut Avenue, University Boulevard, Georgia Avenue and Veirs Mill Road. Relying on other stations to respond during these shortage periods is also problematic. The traffic in our area is consistently heavy and often times bumper to bumper which will cause even further delays in response time.

The Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board recognizes tough decisions have to be made during your deliberations on the FY10 Operating Budget and we ask the County Council's Public Safety Committee to take a thorough look at the direct service cuts in career firefighter hours and work with the Department of Fire and Rescue Services to find a solution to this public safety matter.

Sincerely,


Sheldon Fishman, Chair

cc: Councilmembers
Minna Davidson
Chief Richard Bowers
Tom Brown, WVRs

Quality of Life



MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

December 17, 2008

Secretary Raymond A. Skinner
Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
100 Community Place
Crownsville, Maryland 21032

Dear Secretary Skinner:

On behalf of the fifteen members of the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB), I want to express my support for the application of the Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) for Neighborhood Conservation Initiative funds from the State. MCCAB represents the Glenmont-Layhill-Aspen Hill neighborhoods within Zip Code 20906. As you are aware, this region has one of the highest foreclosure rates in Montgomery County. NCI funding will support and promote DHCA's multifaceted approach to addressing foreclosures in the County. We have had DHCA Director Richard Nelson brief us on the complexity and the depth of the situation in our area.

In cooperation with DHCA, we helped to sponsor a Foreclosure Prevention Workshop in November that was, unfortunately, very well-attended by many desperate people. DHCA has already committed local resources for housing counseling for households facing foreclosure, and has partnered with DHCD to take on the risk faced by lenders in the County. Mr. Nelson told Board members that federal funding would be forthcoming to acquire foreclosed homes which he would utilize in the hard-hit Glenmont-Layhill-Aspen Hill section of our Mid-County service area. These homes would then be renovated and rented to very low-income households by the Housing Opportunities Commission. We believe this will be a step in helping our area's housing problem, and will be supervised by a responsible agency.

State NCI funding will provide another tool for the County to use in creating a balanced approach to foreclosure mitigation and prevention. Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sheldon Fishman".

Sheldon Fishman, Chair

cc: Richard Nelson, DHCA, Director
Luann Korona, Community Development Division, Chief

Quality of Life



MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

March 16, 2009

The Honorable Isiah Leggett
Montgomery County Executive
50 Monroe Street
Rockville, Maryland 20850

The Honorable Phil Andrews
President, Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear County Executive Leggett and Council President Andrews:

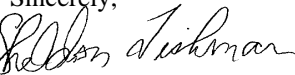
At the November 2008 meeting of the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB), our members discussed and subsequently reviewed the proposed Code Enforcement Work Group Final Report (Report) to the County Executive. The recommendations in this Report being made by the Work Group fall under three broad categories:

1. Legislative changes to various chapters of the County Code;
2. Business process changes and improved coordination and cross training for DPS, DHCA, MCFRS, and DEP inspectors and MCPD; and
3. Education programs for residents and community associations that inform property owners of their rights and responsibilities.

The whole set of recommendations listed in the Executive Summary of the Report are fully endorsed by the MCCAB and should be reviewed as a package. The MCCAB also strongly supports any actions that need to be taken by the County Executive and the County Council in order to begin implementation of these recommendations.

The MCCAB also recognizes that the County is currently in difficult economic times and encourages community, business, nonprofit and neighborhood collaborations to retain the aesthetic, financial and community quality of neighborhoods in the mid-county region.

The MCCAB intends to issue a follow up letter with recommendations on such collaborations as well as highlighting areas from the Proposal where these collective efforts may encourage and promote proactive code enforcement and compliance for all populations impacted by these recommendations in the mid-county region.

Sincerely,

Sheldon Fishman, Chair

Quality of Life



MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

April 28, 2009

Ms. Frances W. Bush, Director
Community Planning and Development Division
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
District of Columbia Field Office
820 First Street, N.E., Suite 300
Washington, DC 20002-4205

Dear Ms. Bush:

On behalf of the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board, I want to express our support for using the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-R) funding the County is eligible to receive through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 to address community needs in the Mid-County Focused Neighborhood Assistance Area.

We appreciate the opportunity to speak out in support of this much-needed assistance and the amendment prepared by Montgomery County to its Consolidated Plan to receive this additional \$1,376,548 in CDBG-R stimulus funding.

Department of Housing and Community Affairs staff members in coordination with our Regional Services Center, have met with residents and others in the community, including representatives of the public schools and the Police Department to identify community development needs. Mr. Richard Y. Nelson, Jr., Director of the Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) has also met with us to discuss housing-related needs, particularly the serious impact of foreclosure events on our community.

CDBG-R funds will be used to meet identified needs, with priority given to our community. We support using funds for eligible activities including those to enhance public and pedestrian safety, improve the environment and in support of housing-related neighborhood preservation initiatives.

We encourage HUD to approve the County's substantial amendment to Montgomery County's Consolidated Plan quickly, so that DHCA can access these resources to enhance our community. Thank you for the opportunity to express our support.

Sincerely,

Sheldon Fishman
Chair

Quality of Life



MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

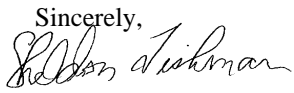
May 22, 2009

Mr. David Chikvashvili
Department of Housing and Community Affairs
Montgomery County Government
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Mr. Chikvashvili:

On behalf of the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB), I would like to share the Board's support to provide priority funding for the Mid-County Focused Neighborhood Assistance area with funds Montgomery County is eligible to receive in Community Development Block Grant-Recovery (CDBG-R) funding from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. It is our understanding that these funds will be used on infrastructure improvements, housing and other eligible activities that support broad neighborhood improvement strategies and priority will be given to eligible activities implemented in the Mid-County and Upcounty Focused Neighborhood Assistance Areas or within CDBG-eligible, currently-approved Capital Improvement Project areas in Silver Spring.

We see this funding as an outstanding opportunity to assist the Mid-County Focused Neighborhood Assistance area with some much needed improvements.

Sincerely,

Sheldon Fishman, Chair

cc: Luann Korona, Chief
Community Development Division, DHCA

Quality of Life



MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

June 8, 2009

The Honorable Isiah Leggett
County Executive
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Mr. Leggett:

As you undoubtedly know, the economic downturn has resulted in an unprecedented number of foreclosed homes across the nation. Montgomery County has not been immune to this contagion and we applaud your focus on the problems surrounding foreclosure and code enforcement. However, we would like to bring to your attention one continuing problem in the Mid-County area and a possible solution to a second.

We understand from Rick Nelson, the County's Director of the Department of Housing and Community Affairs, that part of your code enforcement outreach targeted realtors who were listing very small homes as containing multiple bedrooms (i.e. 900 square feet, 6 bedrooms). In her recent presentation to the MCCAB, Alexandra Minckler, president of the Aspen Hill Civic Association, provided us with specific examples of these listings. These listings continue to be marketed online. These homes, which serve basically as dormitories, present a safety hazard to those living there and are an eyesore to the community. The listings also distort the true nature of the house and discourage families from purchasing. We would encourage that any realtors offering listings which appear to be misrepresentations of the property size be disciplined accordingly by the Board of Realtors. Many of the homes listed with multiple bedrooms are foreclosed properties. Since County officials cite Aspen Hill as one of the County's foreclosed hotspots, we believe that immediate action is needed to reestablish the neighborhood.

Additionally, as the number of foreclosed or abandoned homes increases in Montgomery County, many of these neglected houses are quickly turning to neighborhood blights, and could attract thieves, vagrants and vandals. In an effort to save a neighborhood and alleviate financial pressure on local governments, we propose the "Adopt a Home Program".

The program is envisioned as follows: a coordinator from a community civic association could work with the County to identify foreclosed homes. When an individual volunteer calls, the coordinator can match the caller with an abandoned house in his/her neighborhood. The volunteer would then adopt the house and take care of its external upkeep (trash clean up, watering/cutting lawn). There must be waivers of liability and we recommend that liens be placed on the homes to reimburse costs incurred by the *Adopt a Home* sponsor, either the individual or civic association. Liability concerns can also be mitigated by emulating the County's award-winning Adopt-a-Road Program.

The program would be based on Riverside's County's (CA) "Community Cares Clean-up Project" (excerpt of article enclosed). Since August 2008, the grass roots community program has revitalized 61 homes. The success of the program is evident in the fact that all of the revitalized homes have since been sold.

Juen 8, 2009 Letter to County Exeutive Leggett

We propose the *Adopt a Home Program* as a cost-saver for the County and a proactive measure that communities can take to maintain home values and invest in their communities. Again, we appreciate your work to combat the problems surrounding foreclosure and code enforcement in Montgomery County and stand ready to assist you in your efforts.

Sincerely,



Sheldon Fishman, Chair

Enclosure to June 8, 2009 Letter to County Executive Leggett

Excerpt from The Press-Enterprise website article

http://www.pe.com/localnews/murrieta/stories/PE_News_Local_S_shometeam09.2331fd2.html

Murrieta neighbors 'adopting' neglected and foreclosed houses

10:00 PM PDT on Monday, September 8, 2008By ROCKY SALMON

The Press-Enterprise

MURRIETA - Barbara Nugent used to walk with her friends through nearby Murrieta neighborhoods and complain about the growing weeds, trash-strewn yards and dying lawns.

Finally, she had enough. She took her dog home, grabbed a Weed Whacker and went to work on her neighbor's newly sprouted weed jungle. From that moment, a movement was born.

"Enough is enough," Nugent said. "This is our community and we are going to do something about it. We can't rely on the city for everything."

Nugent is working with other residents on a program called Community Cares Clean-up Project. Residents can call Nugent to adopt a house to take care of.

Nugent is working with the city to get a list of foreclosed homes so when a resident calls, she can match the caller with a nearby house.

She has watched volunteers mow lawns, trim hedges, repaint fences and lug truck beds full of weeds to dumps.

"All it takes is one day of cleanup and it makes everything look better," she said.

For the city it is another way to fight the foreclosure crisis. In a recent workshop, city staff told Murrieta City Council members that at least 1 in 9 homes in the city is in foreclosure or in the preliminary stages.

The city passed a law that requires banks to keep up with foreclosed properties. If not, the city can levy fines and put a tax lien on a house. The city has also hosted foreclosure workshops.

But it takes time to track down all the foreclosed homes and get the banks to act, city officials have said.

Nugent's group aims to provide extra help.

Nugent came up with the idea during her daily walks with friends through surrounding neighborhoods.

She said she would complain about the foreclosed homes, especially one where the weeds towered like trees and crabgrass had taken over the planters.

When she started clearing up her first home she thought it would take a few hours. It took her all day.

"You've got to get to these homes as soon as you can," she said. "Before all the crabgrass comes in and the weeds start sprouting up everywhere. If you wait for the home to go through the foreclosure process and for the city to take action, it's too late."

Councilman Warnie Enochs offered his services when he heard what Nugent was doing.

"I didn't know what I was getting into," he laughed.

Nugent gave him a home in Historic Downtown Murrieta to clean. Enochs spent all day on the property and hauled at least a dozen trash bags out of the place.

"It was tough work but that's my home now," he said. "I'm in charge of keeping it up and every time I go through there I know I did my little part to help out. It's amazing what Barbara is doing and I just hope everyone else helps her."

Anyone interested in adopting a home can e-mail Nugent at ifnotuswho@yahoo.com

Reach Rocky Salmon at 951-375-3739 or rsalmon@PE.com

Recreation and Parks



MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

June 3, 2009

Mr. Royce Hanson, Chair
Montgomery County Planning Board
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Dear Mr. Hanson:

The members of the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board, support the request by the Kensington Heights Citizens Association that the M-NCPPC name the playground in Kensington Heights Park in honor of Wayne Goldstein.

Many people who live and/or work in Montgomery County were saddened by the recent death of Wayne Goldstein, a longtime community activist. As you know, Wayne died on April 27, when he suffered a sudden heart attack while on his way to testify before the Montgomery County Board of Appeals.

Wayne could often be found at community meetings, County Council meetings, and Planning Board hearings. A landscape designer by day, his true passion was community activism. Wayne was a tireless advocate for the people of Montgomery County, always giving 110 percent to improve the quality of life for residents. In this capacity, he often advocated on behalf of people he never met, never asking for anything in return. He was a true believer in civic engagement and ensuring that the government *of the people worked for the people*.

Wayne's willingness to involve himself in a long list of civic endeavors truly distinguished him. In addition to being the current president of the Kensington Heights Citizens Association, Wayne served as a recent president of the Montgomery County Civic Federation, was the current president of Montgomery Preservation Inc., was a columnist for the Montgomery County Sentinel newspaper, and was a consistent defender of the environment and historic preservation. In 2008, he was recognized by the Civic Federation with the "Star Cup" for his outstanding public service and leading advocacy for civic causes.

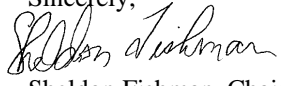
As you know, in October 1998, the Montgomery County Planning Board adopted a policy and guidelines for the renaming of park facilities. The policy states that as "appropriate, parks and areas and facilities within parks may be named to reflect...persons of historic or outstanding civic service." Wayne Goldstein fits this criterion perfectly. The proposed renaming of Kensington Heights Park playground to honor Wayne Goldstein complies with the Commission's adopted criteria under the definition of "Persons of Outstanding Civic Service to the County or Commission."

County Executive Isiah Leggett summed up Wayne best, saying, "I will remember the ever-present fedora, the satiric testimony before County Council hearings, and the bundle of energy and idealism that was Wayne.... I have lost a friend. Montgomery County has lost an institution."

June 3, 2009 Letter to Mr. Royce Hanson

With Wayne's passing, Montgomery County has lost a true advocate for the public interest. He leaves a tremendous void in civic circles. In an effort to recognize Wayne's dedicated service to his community and all County residents, we urge the M-NCPPC to rename Kensington Heights Park to honor Wayne Goldstein.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

Sheldon Fishman, Chair

cc: Fred Boyd, Community-Based Planning, MNCPPC

Recreation and Parks



MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

June 3, 2009

The Honorable Phil Andrews
President, Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear County Council President Andrews:

On behalf of the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB), I would like to share the Board's opposition to the proposal to merge the functions of the Mid-County Recreation Advisory Board into the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board as a three-member subcommittee focusing on recreation issues and with a liaison from the MCCAB serving on a County recreation advisory board.

While the MCCAB recognizes the difficult budget situation and the need to make cuts in many areas including staff support of advisory boards, the MCCAB finds that:

- merging the Mid-County Recreation Advisory Board with the MCCAB will reduce the output and timeliness of both boards;
- folding in a mandate for the MCCAB to advise on the specialized area of recreation would adversely impact MCCAB's ability to address the wide range of regional issues it is struggling with already;
- implementing a merger will require new staff costs associated with such a merger and the transition to this new structure and role that the County can ill afford to incur at this time.

In addition, it is not clear what method would be used to change the membership of the MCCAB. Whether it is done through a complete dissolution/reestablishment of the MCCAB, by eliminating three sitting members to be replaced by RAB members, by expanding the MCCAB by three new members, or through attrition over several years, this process will have an adverse impact on the output and functioning of the current citizens advisory board which has functioned and served the County Executive and County Council very well for over 30 years.

As you will see from the attached copy of our letter of May 3, 2005 to the Management and Fiscal Policy Committee of the Montgomery County Council in response to a similar proposal made in the 2002-2004 Committee Evaluation & Review Board's (CERB) final report, the MCCAB opposed the previous recommendation to dissolve the five Area/Regional Recreation Advisory Boards and have area recreation issues become the responsibility of the five Regional Service Centers' Citizens Advisory Boards.

We, therefore, recommend that the MCCAB and the Mid-County Recreation Board be kept as separate boards.

Sincerely,

Sheldon Fishman, Chair

cc: Isiah Leggett, County Executive
Gabriel Alborno, Director, Department of Recreation
Mid-County Recreation Advisory Board

Transportation



MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

October 16, 2008

Mr. Arthur Holmes
Director, Department of Transportation
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Mr. Holmes:

The Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board received a copy of a letter from Ms. Tina McDaniel which was also addressed to you. We are pleased the Department of Transportation has already initiated an evaluation of Procter Street between Dennis Avenue and Dryden Street with regard to speeding - along with her request for stop signs at the corner of Procter and Dryden and the need for painted crosswalks in the area. We support Ms. McDaniel's request.

The Board looks forward to receiving a copy of your evaluation findings to Ms. McDaniel.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Sheldon Fishman".

Sheldon Fishman, Chair
Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board

cc: Ms. Tina McDaniel

Transportation



MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

February 18, 2009

Mr. Paul Jarosinski, President
Cherrywood Homeowners Association
17328 Blossom View Drive
Olney, Maryland 20832

Dear Mr. Jarosinski,

On behalf of the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB), I would like to thank you and your organization for the ongoing dialogue you have had with the MCCAB regarding the Inter-County Connector (ICC). The MCCAB recognizes the work of the Cherrywood Homeowners Association and other Olney civic organizations has played a key role in efforts to improve the impacts of ICC construction on the Olney community, such as through revisions to Contract A of the ICC, e.g., the "Peck" revision. MCCAB has written to support efforts at mitigating the ICC at the intersection of Georgia. In particular, we thank and congratulate Mr. Peck on his initiative and persistence in achieving a significant improvement.

At the November 2008 meeting of the MCCAB in Olney, you and other members of the community expressed concerns with the impact of the ICC construction on the Olney community. Specifically, you expressed your organization's support for de-funding ICC construction. In response to your concerns, I referred this issue to the MCCAB Transportation Committee (Committee) for further study.

The Committee held three formal meetings focusing on this issue including a December 1st meeting that you attended where the discussion included: fiscal challenges facing the State, the impact of inadequate road capacity paralleling the ICC, and the impact of ongoing ICC construction on the quality of life in Olney. The Committee had further deliberations on December 15, 2008 and January 5, 2009 regarding this issue. At its January 5th meeting the Committee examined information provided by the staff of the Mid-County Regional Center concerning MDOT funding of the ICC. The Committee noted that MDOT construction of the ICC has been financed by the issuance of GARVEE Bonds and Toll Revenue Bonds and that de-funding the ICC could impact the State's ability to repay these bonds. Such an outcome could negatively impact the State's AAA bond rating; thus, adversely affect State finances and quality of life throughout the State.

The MCCAB voted to accept the Committee's recommendation that the MCCAB not support de-funding the ICC. The MCCAB deliberated carefully and at length on this issue. It was felt that de-funding the ICC was not justified based on the information that the MCCAB was able to gather.

Thank you again for bringing this issue to the attention of the MCCAB. We remain committed to working with you on efforts to help sustain and improve the quality of life in Olney during the ICC construction and beyond.

Sincerely,

Sheldon Fishman, Chair

Transportation



MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

June 3, 2009

The Honorable Isiah Leggett
Montgomery County Executive
50 Monroe Street
Rockville, Maryland 20850

The Honorable Phil Andrews
President, Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear County Executive Leggett and Council President Andrews:

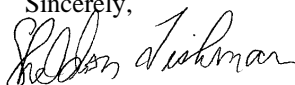
At its February 17th meeting, the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB) was pleased to receive a briefing from Councilmember Marc Elrich on his Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) study proposal. Subsequently, the MCCAB referred this issue to its Transportation Committee for further study. Following a favorable report from its Transportation Committee the MCCAB voted to support funding of the BRT study proposal at its May 19, 2009 meeting.

The MCCAB specifically supports a BRT study which would examine development of BRT service along the Georgia Avenue corridor between Glenmont and Olney and along Veirs Mill Road between Wheaton and Rockville. As you are aware, development of a busway for the Georgia Avenue corridor is ranked second in the County Council's Ten Year Transportation Plan for inclusion in the Development and Evaluation Program of the Maryland Consolidated Transportation Program. Additionally, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission's draft Georgia Avenue Study indicates a need for further study of BRT services along the Georgia Avenue corridor and along Veirs Mill Road.

Although our County is suffering serious economic challenges, the MCCAB believes that certain infrastructure initiatives must be considered now for future development. Councilmember Elrich's proposed BRT study is an initiative which will assist Montgomery County in addressing the traffic congestion and environmental issues that have a great impact on the quality of life of all Montgomery County residents.

I would like to thank Councilmember Elrich for bringing this issue to the attention of the MCCAB. The MCCAB remains committed to working on issues which impact the quality of life of Mid-County residents and looks forward to further dialogue on the BRT study.

Sincerely,



Sheldon Fishman, Chair

cc: Councilmember Elrich

APPENDIX C

Discussion Points for Meeting with County Executive February 25, 2009

Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee Wheaton Redevelopment Advisory Committee

Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board

Given the current fiscal environment, the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board's Budget Committee, with the approval of the full board, decided that the most appropriate use of this forum would be to advocate for changes in the budget process. As the current budget situation appears not to be merely a 'crisis', but an ongoing systemic challenge, the Board respectfully presents the following recommendations which may assist both the County Executive and the County Council in providing greater accountability, transparency, and cost savings opportunities.

Open and Effective Government – We support improved transparency of the County budget and greater links to performance measurement, including the following:

- Publication of Finance Department audit results.
- Public timely availability of scheduled cost reports for department and capital expenditures.
- Expenditures for all County and County-funded agencies on searchable websites.

Budget Reviews - An annual, or at the least, bi-annual base budget review is also recommended.

Use of Technology - Utilization of the CountyStat system, in conjunction with the 311 system to monitor efficiencies and review recommendations with action status online available to the public.

Accountability –

- State audits of MCPS expenditures to identify potential cost savings.
- Prosecution of individuals committing fraud and recovery of derived fiscal benefits. Cost savings recovery for contractor contract non-performance.
- Management accountability for budget overruns relationship to pay for performance.

MCCAB Budget Priorities –The MCCAB respectfully recommends that protecting the most vulnerable in our community during this economic downturn be the budget priority. To this end, we believe that the Mid-County Services Center and its staff perform a vital function in this mission, as a disproportionate number of vulnerable residents are located in the Mid-County region. Specifically a Mid-County Sobering Center may realize a net cost savings by reducing ongoing emergency services for repeat offenders.

A second priority is sustaining programs that are critical to health and safety, especially code enforcement. To this end, we recommend that fees for housing and zoning violations be increased, both as a deterrent and as a revenue stream to be specifically allocated to the operation and funding of additional inspectors.

Wheaton Urban District

Keep the Wheaton Clean and Safe Team Intact – The uniform presence of both the Clean and Safe Teams sends a message to our community and business owners that the doors in downtown Wheaton are open for business and redevelopment efforts continue to stay on the forefront. They also provide an important element to the public safety aspect of the downtown area in working with the CBD Police.

Keep CBD police at current level – Without our dedicated CBD police unit, crime in the downtown area will indeed increase. At the recent incident at Westfield Wheaton, our CBD officers were able to arrive on the scene within moments of the first call.

Establishment of Wheaton Sobering Center – Habitual inebriants are costing the County thousands of dollars in EMS and Police response time. Expansion of the Sobering Center to include downtown Wheaton would allow police and EMS to free up valuable resources and respond to more calls for service. With the creation of a Sobering Center habitual inebriants will be provide a safe location to sober up and will be offered counseling and available services.

Wheaton Redevelopment Advisory Committee

- The Wheaton Redevelopment Advisory Committee (WRAC) is also mindful of the severe fiscal restraints under which the Country is currently operating. As such, they fully subscribe to the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board's recommendations on ensuring that those limited resources are used wisely. It also supports the concerns of both boards about the need to maintain programs such as the Clean and Safe Team, building and housing code enforcement, and adequate policing that maintain the reality and the image of Wheaton as a safe, vibrant, and attractive place to live, work, and visit. Both reality and perception are necessary if the goal of revitalizing Wheaton is to become a reality.

- As to its own priorities, WRAC has a singular goal and focus – the redevelopment of Wheaton. The community has been involved in creating a "vision" for a city center for many years and those efforts had begun to come together in the Sector Plan process and the surrounding decisions being made. Our goal is to ensure that the momentum for these changes is not lost in the current economic downturn. In our view, this means:

- The Sector Plan process must stay on track. While actual development may be slowed for a time, much preparation work must be undertaken before a new project is "shovel-ready." We want to ensure that such, relatively low cost work, is done now so that, when the economy improves, we are ready to move.
 - The discussions about the future of the Regional Library, which can be a cornerstone for a city center and critical mass for new development, is an important example. Any changes with respect to the library need to be carefully thought out, both with respect to the accessibility of any new facility and the use of the existing facility. The current hiatus allows that process to be carried out so that any decisions about relocating versus renovating will be made when funding becomes available.
 - Other efforts are critical to the redevelopment process. We urge continued funding of the redevelopment office and other functions at the Mid-County Center that support that process. We view the office's work to help our existing small businesses survive and expand as critical. They are the heart of Wheaton's unique diversity and the foundation for expansion. We also urge continued funding to allow Wheaton to maintain its viability as an Arts and Entertainment District. WRAC and WUDAC have worked hard with the marketing staff on activities to bring new faces to Wheaton; they urge continued funding to maintain the visibility of Wheaton as the next great place to be.
-
-

Summary of Discussion Items

Fiscal Sustainability – *presented by Sheldon Fishman – Chair, Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board*

- Open and effective government
- Base budget reviews
- Use of Technology – County Stat and MC311 systems
- Accountability

Quality of Life – *presented by Sheldon Fishman – Chair, Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board*

- Protect our most vulnerable residents
- Protect programs critical to safety, health and housing

Wheaton Central Business District – *presented by Brett Schneider – Chair, Wheaton Urban District Advisory Board*

- Keep Wheaton Clean and Safe Team intact and viable
- Keep CBD police at current level
- Continue efforts for nuisance crime abatement – study and/or analysis of expanding the Sobering Center to include Wheaton

Wheaton Redevelopment – *presented by Karen Cordry – Chair, Wheaton Redevelopment Advisory Committee*

- Wheaton Sector Plan kept on schedule
- Provide support to existing small businesses in current fiscal climate
- Support Wheaton Central Business District priorities above
- Maintain promotions and marketing/Arts & Entertainment

APPENDIX D

Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board Testimony to the Montgomery County Council FY2010 County Executive's Recommended Operating Budget April 15, 2009 – 1:30 p.m.

Good afternoon Council President Andrews and Councilmembers. I am Blaine Charak, a member of the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board and Chair of the Board's Budget Committee. My address is 2424 Reddie Drive in Wheaton, Maryland. Today I present my testimony on behalf of the entire Board.

The Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB) agrees with the County Executive that the top priorities of this budget should protect the most vulnerable in our community during this economic downturn. To this end, we believe that the Mid-County Services Center and its staff perform a vital function in this mission, as a disproportionate number of vulnerable residents are located in the Mid-County region. The addition of a Sobering Center in downtown Wheaton may realize a net cost savings by reducing ongoing emergency services for serial inebriants.

A second priority is sustaining programs critical to health and safety, especially code enforcement. We recommend that fees for housing and zoning violations be increased, both as a deterrent and as a revenue stream to be specifically allocated to the operation and funding of additional inspectors.

Given the current fiscal environment, the MCCAB is advocating for changes in the budget process. As the current budget situation appears not to be merely a 'crisis', but an ongoing systemic challenge, the Board respectfully presents the following recommendations which may assist both the County Executive and the County Council in providing greater accountability, transparency, and cost savings opportunities:

Open and Effective Government – We support improved transparency of the County budget and greater links to performance measurements, including the following:

- Publication of Finance Department audit results.
- Timely public availability of scheduled cost reports for department and capital expenditures.
- Expenditures for all County and County-funded agencies on searchable websites.

Budget Reviews - Annual, or at the least, bi-annual departmental base budget reviews are recommended.

Use of Technology - Utilization of the CountyStat Program, in conjunction with the MC311 system to monitor efficiencies and review recommendations with action status online available to the public.

Accountability –

- State audits of MCPS expenditures to identify potential cost savings.
- Prosecution of individuals committing fraud and recovery of derived fiscal benefits. Cost savings recovery for contractor contract non-performance.
- Management accountability for budget overruns relationship to pay for performance.

On behalf of the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board thank you for the opportunity to share our priorities, concerns and suggestions with you today.

APPENDIX E

FY-2011 Capital Improvements Priorities Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board August 6, 2009

Note: See Page of this report for the cover letter transmitting this list.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Redevelopment/revitalization of Glenmont Shopping Center – Create public-private partnership to incentivize, make economically attractive, provide redevelopment credit to owners. Attract better stores to shopping center, rid area of vagrants, better markings in parking lot for traffic flow
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grade Separated interchange at Georgia/Randolph Road – keep project at top of County’s priority list. Opening of ICC (Contract A portion which ends at Routes 97 and 28) will place greater pressure on Georgia Avenue
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grade Separated interchange at 97 and 28 – Traffic entering/exiting ICC will place an even greater burden on this interchange which is already over capacity.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School capacity should be below 105% - concern about overcrowding in Mid-County region schools
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fire Station #18 Relocation – keep construction on schedule, prepare for need for possible temporary relocation to Glenfield Park on Layhill Road prior to completion of permanent location if Georgia-Randolph grade separation project begins in the next few years.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wheaton Library Renovation/Relocation – continue to work with the community throughout the renovation/relocation process. County needs to be more proactive. Include funds for facility planning process to begin, which would also look at current site re-use.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rafferty Center – provide funding for build-out of Rafferty Center and provide the Wheaton community with much-needed additional recreation/arts space.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wheaton Redevelopment – coordination of all Wheaton Projects to go through the Wheaton Redevelopment Program and the Mid-County Regional Center. All County-funded projects should be vetted and coordinated through the appropriate Regional Center.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CIP Process Review – review current procedures for capital project design, procurement and construction management for greater efficiency.

APPENDIX F

**Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board
Testimony to the
Montgomery County Council
ZTA 09-03 Home Occupations and Residential Off-Street Parking
Bill 22-09, Enforcement of County Laws
– Notice of Violation – Appeals
Bill 23-09, Unused Vehicles – Storage
Bill 24-09, Buildings – Permits and Inspections
July 9, 2009**

Good evening Council President Andrews and Members of the Montgomery County Council. I am Sheldon Fishman, Chair of the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB) – my address is 9913 Dameron Drive, Silver Spring, Maryland 20902.

Code enforcement matters have been at the forefront of our agenda for the past three years. What began as a concern with a specific home involved in a fire, then became a valid concern regarding code enforcement issues throughout the Aspen Hill area, and grew to the entire Mid-County region. It was the position of the MCCAB just prior to County Executive Leggett taking office that it was necessary to undertake a systemic review of the entire code enforcement process. We heartily applauded Mr. Leggett's immediate action to meet with the community and form a Code Enforcement Task Force to undertake such a comprehensive review.

The MCCAB did have the opportunity to review the proposed Code Enforcement Work Group Final Report to the County Executive and I am pleased to testify that the entire set of recommendations listed in the Executive Summary of the Final Report was fully endorsed by our Board.

You now have before you for deliberation and approval, the necessary legislation to implement the recommendations of the Final Report: (1) a Zoning Text Amendment on Home Occupations and Residential Off-street Parking; (2) Bill 22-09, Enforcement of County Laws – Notice of Violation – Appeals; (3) Bill 23-09, Unused Vehicles – Storage; and Bill 24-09, Buildings – Permits and Inspections. This integrated package of legislation will allow for the preservation and protection for all our communities. We look forward to the Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee's review of this legislation and their recommendations to the full Council.

We very much appreciate your consideration of this legislation and your commitment to protect and improve the quality of life for the residents of Montgomery County. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you this evening.